

**Minutes of the 58th Meeting of the Supervisory Panel  
Renewable Energy Consumer Code  
Wednesday, 16 December 2020**

**Present**

(Meeting held on the Go To Meeting platform)

- Steve Lisseter - Chairman
- Walter Carlton - Deloitte
- Zoe Guijarro – Citizens Advice
- Sarah Howard – Customer Operations Manager, MCS
- Atif Iqbal - Certsure
- Gretel Jones – Independent Consumer Expert
- David Laird - Independent Energy and Consumer Codes Expert

**In attendance**

- Virginia Graham - RECC
- Aida Razganaite - RECC
- Rebecca Robbins – RECC
- Abena Simpey – RECC (part)

**Apologies**

- Bryn Aldridge - Independent Trading Standards Expert
- Chris Avgherinos – Domestic RHI, BEIS
- Chris Jackson – Environmental Programmes, Ofgem
- Kevin McCann – Solar Trade Association

**1. Introduction and apologies**

The Chairman welcomed attendees to the 58th Supervisory Panel Meeting. He noted the apologies received owing to it being the last full work week before the end of the year with many attendant deadlines. He also explained that there was an online meeting of the independent Applications Panel underway which involved one Panel Member. He noted that the meeting was being held online for the fourth successive time.

**2. Minutes of last meeting**

The Members agreed the Minutes of the 57<sup>th</sup> Supervisory Panel Meeting as being an accurate record of the meeting and agreed that they could be made available on the RECC website.

**3. Matters Arising**

The Executive confirmed that all the actions in the summary had been completed or were in train. Virginia explained that the Executive was considering ways to highlight good practice among RECC Members. She also confirmed that a joint workshop for approved Consumer Codes had recently

been set up and that, as a priority, it would be looking at the value to businesses of membership of more than one Consumer Code. She agreed that the Executive would report back to the next meeting on any actions agreed. She also explained that the Executive was involved in a joint project with the Green Finance Institute to ensure that lenders had confidence in the sector. Once complete the Executive would provide further details and draft the required guidance for installers and consumers.

The Chairman thanked her for the update and invited any participants who had missed the presentation on due diligence and compliance checking processes at the previous meeting to attend an additional presentation. He asked for anyone interested to contact Rebecca Robbins or Aida Razgunaite in the Executive. He commended the quality of the presentation.

Gretel Jones asked that the Executive provide the Panel with an update as to the status of the heat pump analysis presented by Colin Meek at the previous meeting. She stressed that she had found his presentations both informative and important. Virginia agreed to ensure an update was provided at the next meeting.

Finally, Panel Members asked that the Executive provide a briefing on the recently-published Energy White Paper and the forthcoming Heat and Buildings White Paper, and they asked for an update at the next meeting on the impact Brexit was likely have on small-scale renewable energy generation.

#### **4. Highlight Report**

Aida Razgunaite reported that, during the period, RECC had had a net increase of 87 new Code Members, compared with 47 in the previous period. She explained that the continuing strong demand for RECC membership was being driven by the forthcoming Green Home Grants and the extension of the Domestic Renewable Heat Incentive to 31 March 2022. As a result, at the end of November, RECC had 1,660 Members as against 1,580 at the end of August.

Rebecca Robbins reported that RECC had carried out 49 compliance checks during the period, up by 10 from the previous period. Of these she explained that the Executive was following up with 18 regarding the provisions of insurance-backed warranties for consumers. During the period, RECC had allocated a further 12 audits, all desk-based since all site-based audits were currently on hold. Four audits from the previous period had been closed during the period: two members had reached full compliance, one was now subject to non-compliance and one had had its membership lapsed.

She further reported that RECC had invoked compliance action against 4 members during the period, up from 2 in the previous quarter. Of these one had since satisfied the requirements, one had agreed to sign an undertaking, one was still in the process and we were awaiting a response from the fourth. Consider extra initiatives for CSQ completions

Virginia Graham reported that RECC had received 80 complaints during the period (31 had been for RECC), up from 58 in the previous period (17 of these had been for RECC). By way of context, she confirmed that 14,101 domestic installations had been registered by RECC Members during the period. Of those complaints received, 44 were about solar PV, 16 were about air source heat pumps, 5

were about biomass boilers, 4 were about ground-source heat pumps and 4 were about solar thermal systems.

Virginia explained that RECC resolved 5 complaints during the period: 1 following RECC's initial involvement, 2 by formal mediation and 2 by arbitration. Six arbitration awards had been published this quarter, of which: 2 consumer claims had failed and 4 consumer claims had succeeded. Turning to awards which had been published in the previous quarter, by complied with in this quarter, consumers had been awarded a total of £16,021 for a number of issues including cancellation of a contract and compensation for loss of Feed-in-Tariff.

Panel Members thanked Rebecca, Aida and Virginia for their overviews. They said they had found the information helpful and congratulated the Executive on all their hard work over the year.

## **5. RECC response to 2020 Members' Survey**

Panel Members thanked the Executive for the paper summarising its response to the RECC Members' Survey presented at the previous meeting. Panel Members noted that a special discounted membership rate had been offered to all RECC Members with 10 years or more continuous membership. Panel Members liked the A4 Summary of RECC Member Benefits sent out with renewal invoices.

They suggested that the Executive include information from the Highlight Report in the next edition of the RECC Newsletter, particularly about RECC's monitoring and compliance work. They also suggested that the Executive consider sharing more information on RECC's monitoring and compliance role on website. Finally, they agreed that a summary of responses should be communicated to RECC Members once the renewal process was complete.

## **6. Green Homes Grant scheme – update**

Sarah Howard, MCS representative, gave an overview of the Green Homes Grant scheme which had been live for the past two months. She explained that, since the announcement that the scheme had been extended, MCS-certified installers had shown greater interest in taking part, but that there were several links in the supply chain which mean that only a small number of consumers had received vouchers to date. She explained that the company running the scheme, ICF, had found the volumes difficult to deal with, and that some processes were being streamlined.

Panel Members asked to be kept updated with the way the scheme was running, and with any evidence of mis-selling or shoddy workmanship that might emerge.

## **7. Flexible energy, demand-side response offers to domestic consumers**

Virginia Graham introduced the brief paper that had previously been tabled setting out the principal issues for consumer protection arising out of the latest developments. Panel Members agreed that the topic was of great interest and encouraged the Executive to report back to them regularly on the progress made with the research project envisaged for 2021. They also agreed that the Executive

should establish what work Ofgem is planning as part of its role as regulator of electricity supply companies.

#### **9. AOB and next meetings**

Virginia Graham explained that she had provisionally set out dates for 2021 Supervisory Panel Meetings. These are: **Wednesday, 17 March, Wednesday, 16 June, Wednesday, 15 September and Wednesday, 15 December, all at 2.00 p.m.**

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked Panel Members for their attendance, wished them all a Happy Christmas and closed the Meeting.